

AIR COMMANDO

Any Time, Any Place

Vol. 54, Issue 41

16th Special Operations Wing, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Nov. 10, 2005

Wingman



0 Drinks under 21
0 DUIs
1 Drink an hour
3 Drinks a night

Court-martial

NCO acquitted of child
molestation charges
See Page 3



Behind the Badge: Airmen
steal, write bad checks,
assault, drive under the influ-
ence of alcohol See Page 4



Second CV-22 Osprey arrives
at Edwards Air Force Base,
Calif., Oct. 27 See Page 8

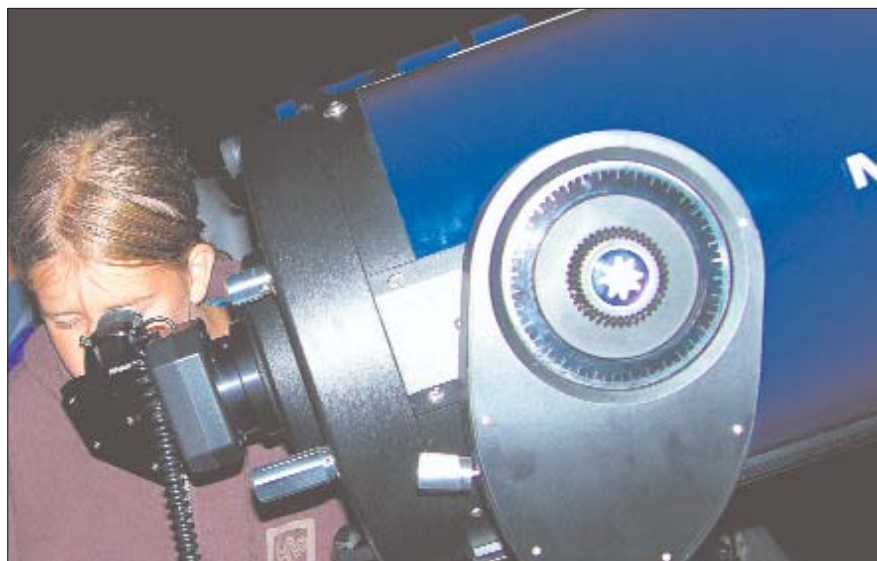
Kick the habit

Smoking ciga-
rettes and oral
cancer are
directly related
See Page 12



Weekend Forecast

Today	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
High 78, Low 45 Partly cloudy	High 75, Low 48 Partly cloudy	High 77, Low 54 Sunny	High 78, Low 56 Partly cloudy



Photograph by Senior Airman Heidi Davis

Seeing stars

Approximately 50 people
gathered for a night of
star gazing Nov. 4 at the
Hurlburt Field Picnic
Grounds. Venus, the
Andromeda Galaxy and
the Ring Nebula were
visible using telescopes
provided by Escambia
Amateur Astronomers
Club representatives. The
annual event was spon-
sored by the base library.

What's it going to take?

Base needs to pick up pace to meet CFC goals

by Senior Airman
Heidi Davis
16th SOW Public Affairs

Each year for six weeks, they walk from Airman to Airman with their pink receipt book and Combined Federal Campaign flyer in hand.

They're not business men and women, they're Hurlburt Field Airmen asking for help.

With a week left in the CFC, campaign representatives want to know what it will take for Team Hurlburt to dig deep and donate.

"We're falling behind last year's pace," said Master Sgt. Shawn Robinson, 16th Logistics Readiness Squadron and assistant base CFC representative. "Our CFC representatives will be revisiting a lot of people to see if they want to donate. Usually if

they go back and ask again, people are likely to donate."

Last year's campaign brought in more than \$400,000. However, Team Hurlburt would need to give more than \$100,000 between now and Nov. 18 to break even with last year's contributions.

"Every service member will receive a three-percent pay increase in January, which is the same time CFC donations will be taken from paychecks," Capt. Chris Lardner, 16th Maintenance Group and base CFC project officer. "Most Airmen won't even miss a few dollars each month."

Some squadrons have given generously each year, but it's not enough. Without 100-percent participation, the base may not reach its goal.

"Donations don't have to

be large," Captain Lardner said. "It's not how much you're giving, and you're participating for the cause of your favorite organizations."

Annually, the CFC charities distribute thousands of dollars to Airmen and civilians in need.

"What people should know is that the CFC organizations help those in need throughout the year. What's given now helps people in the future," Captain Lardner said.

With more than 1,700 organizations involved in CFC, contributions are spent caring for spouses of deceased veterans, giving scholarships to children of military members, providing shelters to homeless animals, researching diseases and much more.

"The giver has complete



control over where his donation goes," Captain Lardner said. "The money isn't put into a donation pool. The giver selects one or more organizations to where he wants his money to be sent."

Although the majority of the CFC charities are community-wide, there are a few that directly impact the Airmen here.

"There were a few individuals who received assistance this year from local CFC organizations," Sergeant Robinson said. "Airmen can give to any organization within the community or to local charities that directly impact our people."

For more information or to make a contribution, contact CFC squadron representatives.

New DUI policy in effect

by Col.
Norman Brozenick Jr.
16th SOW commander

Most members of Team Hurlburt already know that substance abuse falls squarely in the No-Fly Zone.

There are others, however, who are tempted to betray the trust the American people have placed in them.

If you abuse drugs, there are already mechanisms that direct initiation of your discharge from the United States Air Force.

I am now directing that your future utility in the Air Force also be evaluated if you drive under the influence of alcohol.

Effective immediately, group commanders will complete an evaluation form similar to the form on this page for any member who drives under the influence of alcohol.

This isn't a game to see who gets caught or when driving under the influence

of alcohol is a mission detractor that we can't tolerate.

What I need you to do is to look after your wingmen.

Judgment is the first function that alcohol impairs, and too many mission-impacting and career-impacting decisions have been made in bars or in the dorms or at home after drinking.

It can be hard to do, especially for a friend, but it's exactly what you need to do – every time.

I have initiated several alcohol-related policies you should already be aware of.

First, if you drink and drive, your driving privileges at Hurlburt Field are suspended for a year. We will also evaluate your future utility in the U.S. Air Force.

If you're a wingman in the car, your driving privileges are also suspended for a year.

Those under age 21 who

Subject name and unit		
Specifics regarding incident:		
Why/why not the member has further utility in the United States Air Force:		
Group Commander Name	Date	Signature

16th Special Operations Wing DUI Retention Evaluation Form

drive with any alcohol in their system – even .01, will also face periods of suspension.

Finally, anyone involved in any alcohol-related incident will lose the privilege to buy or consume alcohol anywhere on

Hurlburt Field.

We rely on your courage as Airmen in our Global War on Terrorism.

I also need to rely on your courage to help your wingman if he or she is about to drive under the influence of alcohol.

Develop your own leadership style, execute it

by 1st Lt. Louis Carvin
16th CMS

The 16th Special Operations Wing leadership paves the way for success as a cohesive fighting force by relaying its vision and providing the necessary tools to allow junior Airmen to learn the art of leadership.

A part of these tools is a philosophy of action termed "16th SOW Aimpoints," which are listed on the right-hand side of the page.

In order to become the next generation of leaders, each Airman must develop their own leadership style and foster the desire to lead.

Every Airman contains a blueprint for their true nature and purpose; this discovery is a continual process.

While some may not know the secret of the blueprint, through mentoring, it will unfold, and current leaders can foster this development

to its exceptional potential.

Leaders are grown from within an organization through challenging experiences and interaction with subordinates, peers and senior leaders.

A common concept on becoming a leader is to learn from past and present leaders. Learn from these talented leaders, seek them out as mentors and observe them.

A fact to remember is that leadership and mentoring isn't limited to a certain positions. In most situations, the primary mentor is the individual's immediate supervisor. However, mentoring may be provided by others. The mentor is a guide who can show the way by being a positive role model. Mentoring is a cornerstone in the way leadership and professional development is managed.

Risk is another component in the development of future leaders. Leaders must step outside of one's

comfort zone and take on new situations with a prudent decision-making process. Airmen must learn intelligent and calculated risk-taking techniques, in which the risk has a legitimate cost-reward relationship, as explained in the Air Force's operational risk management model.

Additionally, the Air Force leadership model defines this process as facilitating change, encouraging boundary breaking, embracing innovative approaches and addressing resistance to change. Air Commandos are fortunate to be part of an atmosphere where the attitude for the development of the future Air Force and its leaders is encouraged and practiced.

A good place to start in developing leadership potential is knowing one's own core values, the Air Force's core values and the ability to execute them.

16th SOW Aimpoints

- Fight and win
- Take best care of our wingmen, families and resources
- Become the next generation of Air Force and Air Commando leaders

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Submitting articles

The deadline for submissions to the COMMANDO is noon Monday for briefs the week of publication. Articles may be submitted on IBM format computer disk or via electronic mail. Non-electronic submissions must be typed, double-spaced. All submissions must include the name and telephone number of a person to call.

Open Line

The Commander's Open Line is your direct line to the base commander for questions or suggestions about subjects of concern to the Hurlburt Field community. To receive a response, leave your name, unit and telephone number. Open lines of general interest will be printed in the COMMANDO. Other questions will be answered by letter or phone call. Remember, the quickest and most efficient way to resolve a problem is to talk directly to the agency responsible. This gives them an opportunity to help you and perhaps improve their process. However, if you're not satisfied with the answer you receive, feel free to give the commander a call at 884-OPEN (6736), or e-mail your concerns to commando@hurlburt.af.mil.

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Wingman Designated driver for buddies – \$0
0-0-1-3: Waiting until age 21 to drink – \$0
 Time it takes to make the right decision – 1 minute
 Time it takes to call Airmen Against Drunk Driving – 3 minutes

DUI Tracker



Nov. 4-9: 1 DUI
 This year: 22
 DUIs for 2004: 42
 Last DUI: 16th Logistics Readiness Squadron, Nov. 5

Days since last DUI:
 16th OG...37 16th MSG...4
 16th MXG...17 16th MDG...316

Totals are current as of Nov. 9.

Don't Drink and Drive. Call AADD at 884-8844

Potential saves this year: 585

TACP Lightning Challenge

Challenge returns to Hurlburt after five-year hiatus by 2nd Lt. Amy Gonzales 16th SOW Public Affairs

More than 70 Tactical Air Control Party Airmen from installations around the world will convene at Hurlburt Field Sunday to kick off Lightning Challenge '05.

During Lightning Challenge, 36 two-man teams of TACP Airmen will compete head-to-head in competitions that mirror the day-to-day operations of the career field.

Events include an obstacle course, 9 mm marksmanship, field navigation, field antenna construction, reconnaissance and radio operations.

Awards will be given to the top three individuals or teams, depending on the event. The top-placed individual and team will also be eligible for the Air Force Recognition Ribbon.

"It lets Airmen know where they stand in the career field," said Master Sgt.

Brett Ramos, Detachment 3, 342nd Training Squadron superintendent. "We only test the competitors on skills and equipment that's standard throughout the career field."

TACPs are the Air Force's close air support liaison to the Army.

When they complete training here, they are assigned to Army airborne, air assault, armor, mechanized and light infantry, ranger and special forces units.

Lightning Challenge began in the early 1980s and used to be considered the Super Bowl of TACP, said Sergeant Ramos.

The event was held here annually until 1990, when it was cancelled due to the kick-off of Operation Desert Storm. It began again in 1991, but was cancelled in 1995 after hurricanes Erin and Opal delivered heavy blows to the Gulf Coast. It resumed in 1996.

The last time Lightning Challenge was held was in 2000.

Since the beginning of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, the

operations tempo for TACPs has been so demanding that the competition couldn't be held.

But with this year's return of the event, organizers are hoping to bring a friendly competitive spirit back to the TACP world.

"We're hoping this competition drums up a lot of competition in the career field," said Sergeant Ramos.

Because the event hasn't been held for so long, this year will have competitors as young as senior airmen buying for a piece of TACP prestige, said Sergeant Ramos.

Not only is the event good for developing friendly competition, it gives units the opportunity to test out new gear.

For example, competitors get to use the new Defense Advanced Global Positioning System receiver, or DAGR, said Sergeant Ramos.

However, what Airmen take away from the competition is what's most important.

"Training and camaraderie are probably the number one goal of Lightning Challenge," said Sergeant Ramos.

NCO acquitted of child molestation charge

by Master Sgt. Kevin Owen 16th SOW Public Affairs

A Hurlburt Field NCO was acquitted of molesting his daughter's then five-year-old friend several years ago at a general court-martial here, Nov. 2.

The eight-member panel took less than an hour to find the accused not guilty of committing an indecent act with minor under the age of 16 – a violation of Article 134 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

A charge was brought against the NCO after the alleged victim told her mother that she had a nightmare about the event.

Both the government and the defense agreed that her story was fairly consistent; however, the defense argued that it was vague and ambiguous about what actually happened.

She recalled only waking up, hot and sweating like from a "nightmare," with her stomach and private parts hurting. She said she remembered the accused was present in the room and may have been touching her

when she woke up, while sleeping in a twin bed with the accused's daughter. She also recalled him immediately taking her to call her mother to come and get her.

The child maintained a friendship with the accused's daughter and played at their house numerous times after the alleged event. When questioned by the defense, she admitted that she often had nightmares before and after the alleged incident.

"This has been a nightmare for my family and me. For the last year we have had to deal with this false accusation. The fact that it went as far as it did was a clear miscarriage of justice, but the truth came out in the end," said the acquitted NCO.

"I trust him with my life regularly and consider him to be an incredible human being with whom I and my family regularly spend time. I have and will trust him to safely take care of my children," said a former supervisor.

The defense called no witnesses, and cross examined only the alleged victim and her mother.

NOTE: Third inbound lane terminated; main gate base traffic rerouted

Effective Monday, morning traffic entering the main gate from the east of Hurlburt Field will need to use the two inbound lanes. The temporary third inbound lane will no longer be used. Traffic entering the main gate from the west of the base will need to stay in the newly constructed right lane. The new vehicle inspection lane adjacent to the Visitor Control Center will also go into full operation on the same day. All commercial traffic entering the installation will be examined in the new area before proceeding to the gate for entry.

For more information, call police services at 884-6185.

Bone marrow registry finds matches for those in need

by Master Sgt. Kevin Owen 16th SOW Public Affairs

Hurlburt Field's Air Commandos and their families are being asked to take part in a bone marrow registry drive 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. Thursday between the base exchange and commissary.

Approximately 500 children and adults affiliated with the Department of Defense are diagnosed each year with leukemia or other fatal blood diseases.

A bone marrow transplant is likely their only hope.

This happens to be the case with Kadin, 3, who's family is stationed at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. When he was 5 months old, he was diagnosed with leukemia. His medical team fought the disease with chemotherapy.

Kadin went into remission for three years, however, his family recently learned his disease had returned. His doctors believe the best hope for long-term survival is a bone-marrow transplant.

"To help Kadin and others like him is pretty simple: one small tube of blood and a registration form," said Dee Dee Rodriguez, bone marrow registry drive co-coordinator. "The process is no different than having a blood test as part of a medical appointment."

"The results are added to the National Marrow Donor Registry as well as the Department of Defense Marrow Center in Washington D.C.," added Tech. Sgt. David Rodriguez, Dee Dee's husband and drive co-coordinator.

Hurlburt Field coordinators and senior leadership hope to see 500 names added to the registry during the drive.

There aren't many limitations on who can register. Individuals must be 18-60 years old and in good health. Don't be concerned about any foreign travel or vaccinations received.

Any possible limits will be determined during the secondary screenings after an initial match has been made.

After filling out DOD Form 2576, bone marrow registry consent form, individuals will be added to the list of possible donors.

According to the DOD Bone Marrow Program Web site, the procedure to harvest the bone marrow is simple and virtually painless. A small amount of marrow is collected from the back of the pelvic bone using a special needle and syringe.

The marrow is naturally replenished within a few weeks. Additionally, donors incur no medical fees, and travel and incidental expenses are paid.

Sergeant Rodriguez and his wife have a special connection with all families like Kadin's. They lost their own son, Sergio, 11, to leukemia.

"This is how we pay tribute to Sergio," said Mrs. Rodriguez. "Childhood cancer is something that no one wants to think about. We hope to change that so other families can have happier outcomes than ours."

For more information about the bone marrow donation process, visit www.dodmarrow.com.

OPSEC:
Learn to think like a wolf

In the wild, a wolf studies his prey until he finds vulnerability, then he strikes.
Like the wolf, our enemies are watching and waiting.
Don't let them gain an advantage.
Use operations security and learn to think like the wolf.

Behind the Badge: Airmen steal, assault, wreck vehicles, write bad checks, drive under influence

by Tech. Sgt.
Parrish Hollingsworth
16th SFS

Driving with suspended license

A guard at the main gate radioed the law enforcement desk to check a civilian's drivers' license because his license showed expired. The license was suspended, and the Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office was contacted. A deputy arrived and issued a summons to the driver.

Worthless checks

Two Hurlburt Field members were arrested for writing worthless checks. After being processed by the sheriff's department, the individuals were released on bail to their first sergeants.

Theft

A military member reported \$350 worth of personal and military property was taken from the break area of his work center. Security forces are investigating the incident.

A complainant telephoned the Security Forces Control Center to report the theft of Army Air Force Exchange Service property. The complainant said that he caught a military dependent stealing merchandise and funds from the shoppette over a period of time. The approximate value of the stolen property was \$142.65. The subject was barred from entering any

AAFES facility, and after processing, was released to his sponsor.

Suspicious odor, possible narcotics

On two different dates, a gate guard radioed the SFCC and said that while searching contractor vehicles, he detected a suspicious odor emitting from the vehicles. The sheriff's department was contacted, and a deputy was dispatched. The drivers of the vehicles were arrested for possession of a controlled substance.

Major vehicle accident

Security forces were notified of a major vehicle accident on Independence Road across from the Air Park. The driver of a vehicle said that he wasn't paying attention and ran into the rear of another vehicle, causing a chain reaction accident with two other vehicles.

One vehicle had to be towed from the scene, and one driver was injured. The base fire department arrived on the scene, but the injured driver refused treatment.

Domestic assault

A military member's wife said that she was struck by her husband during an altercation at their on-base house. The military member was apprehended for domestic assault, and after processing, was released to his first sergeant.

Civil arrest, disorderly conduct

The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Department contacted the SFCC to relay two Air Force members on temporary duty from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., had been arrested off base for disorderly conduct. The Airmen were given over the custody of their first sergeant.

DUI

A Hurlburt Field member drove after consuming alcohol. The subject approached the main gate, and when asked for his driver's license, he gave the guard a credit card. A security forces patrol arrived and detected a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage coming from the subject. The subject consented to perform a standard field sobriety test and failed all portions of the test. The subject was apprehended, and after processing, was released to his first sergeant.

Help wanted

If you have any information concerning a crime, call 884-7777.

Did You Know?

When approaching a troop movement on a roadway, you must reduce your speed to 5 mph.

Personnel operating bicycles on the base must wear a helmet. All bicycles must be equipped with a head and taillight during the hours of darkness. If operated on the roadways, all bicyclist must follow the same rules of the road as motor vehicles.

14th Weapons School kicks off integration training in Alabama

Courtesy of the
14th WPS

ANNISTON MUNICIPAL

AIRPORT, Ala. – On the night of Nov. 2, the Air Force Weapons School's Hurlburt-based 14th Weapons Squadron kicked off its joint special operations integration training phase, known as the Special Operations Forces Exhibition.

Over the next two weeks, the 14th WPS will students in the fine points of integrating joint combat power to effectively conduct SOF-unique missions.

SOFEX-1 was the first of three integrated, complex missions that the 14th WPS conducted, each one designed to focus on a primary mission.

The SOFEX missions emphasize fast, efficient integration-focused plan-

ning and execution with five airframes and the Air Force Special Operations Command battlefield Airmen and other joint-service SOF partners.

"Until now, the students have been focusing mostly on employment of their own particular aircraft," said Lt. Col. Chris Kaufman, 14th WPS commander.

"Now they're coming together to face complex missions and scenarios designed to provide a realistic opportunity to hone the skills they've learned up to this point," he said.

"They're basically planning and executing an integrated, joint-readiness-exercise-style over the course of two days, then extensively debriefing what they've learned," Colonel Kaufman said. "It's a pressure cooker designed to equip future

Air Force weapons officers with the tools they need to be capable of integrating with air and ground SOF, and conventional forces in peace and wartime."

The first SOFEX mission was an MC-130-focused airfield seizure mission, with MH-53 PAVE LOWs and HH-60 PAVE HAWKS simultaneously infiltrating special forces to conduct a synchronized direct action mission.

A different formation of MC-130H Combat Talon II and MC-130P Combat Shadow aircraft dropped special tactics teams and rangers to seize the airfield while AC-130 Gunships and A-10 Thunderbolt IIs orbited overhead providing surveillance and fire support.

The airfield was closed for the evening to all outside air traffic, and all

power and lighting on the field was off to allow the aircraft and ground forces to operate in as realistic a setting as possible.

"We have an outstanding relationship with Anniston's airfield management team, the local government and local law enforcement," said Lt. Col. Mike Thurber, 14th WPS director of operations.

"SOFEX is actually quite an event," he said. "It's not uncommon to have a small crowd of spectators outside the airfield fence watching the exercise. All the local papers are usually talking about it."

The three SOFEX missions are part of a larger picture, designed to prepare the students for the Weapons School's graduation exercise at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., in December.



U.S. Navy photograph by Petty Officer 3rd Class Kristopher Wilson
Sailors aboard the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise connect a set of replenishment slings to the cargo hook of an HH-60 Seahawk helicopter during a vertical ammunition on-load conducted with the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman Nov. 3.

Brothers In Arms

Army

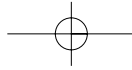
CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, AR
RAMADI, Iraq – Operation Steel Curtain continues in the town of Husaybah near the Iraq-Syria border. Approximately 1,000 Iraqi troops and 2,500 Soldiers and Marines are moving through the city, house by house, to restore security along the border and destroy the al Qaeda in Iraq terrorist network operating throughout the region.

Marines

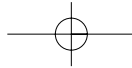
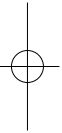
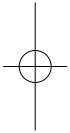
MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. – Marines with 2nd Radio Battalion, B Company, in combination with 2nd Air Delivery Platoon, took part in their first jump in more than a year at drop zone Condor here Nov. 1. Approximately 30 Marines visited DZ Condor, but only about half had the opportunity to step off the back of a CH-53D helicopter.

Navy

VICTORIA, Seychelles – The U.S. Navy responded Nov. 7 to a request to dispose of suspected unexploded ordnance left over from a rocket propelled grenade that struck the cruise liner Seabourn Spirit during a Nov. 5 attack by pirates near the coast of Somalia. Once the technicians assured that there was no threat to the cruise liner's passengers, the EOD team removed the remnants.



ARMED FORCES COMM INC
CS/FEDERAL EMP
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DOD health program helps redeploying troops

by Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Service members returning from deployments will now participate in a post-deployment health reassessment program that all the services are instituting, defense officials said at a Pentagon news conference Nov. 4.

This new program will assess the physical and mental health of service members some 90 to 120 days after they've redeployed.

"We recognize that deployments may have an impact on the health and well-being of our service members, and we know from research that health concerns are identified even several months after returning from operational deployments," said Dr. William Winkenwerder, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs.

This new program is in addition to the routine post-deployment health screening that members go through upon return to the states from a deployment, the doctor said.

The program builds on test programs the services have conducted since June. The Army, Navy and Marine Corps tested the program on 3,000 service members. Medical officials said the pilot program was effective and now look to expand it to all returning service members. Those three services plus the Air Force, which started the test program in September, will institute the program in January 2006, officials said.

Key elements of the program include outreach to service members, education and training for service members and their families, screening of service members, assessment by medical professionals, evaluation and

treatment and follow-up. The Air Force plan calls for Airmen to answer an on-line survey and incorporate the survey in with their members' annual physicals. The Army, Navy and Marine Corps will do the assessments face-to-face with the service members.

Winkenwerder said the results, so far, don't indicate that the Global War on Terrorism is affecting "service members or their families in ways different from past wars. What's different is the way we're responding."

The assistant secretary said that it's important that military leaders, service members and clinicians understand the process and buy into it.

"Effective education to gain leadership support and service member participation and optimal clinical practice is critical to the success of this program," he said.

Health officials want to destigmatize

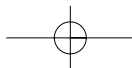
the process of service members going to health professionals for mental or physical help. Returning combat veterans shouldn't believe they must deal with the stresses they experienced by themselves, said Vice Adm. Donald Arthur, Navy surgeon general.

"Everyone who goes into combat is in some way psychologically affected," he said. "I don't think you can get around that fact."

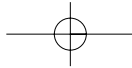
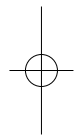
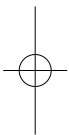
He said it's significant that the military is addressing the issue upfront "with people who understand combat because they have also been there and can more readily talk with the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines who are coming back. We've learned that we shouldn't let our combat veterans go out into society without any questions asked or without any contact, as we used to do."

RIVIERA FITNESS SPA
CS RHP/2 FOR 1
571550
2 X 7.00

ARMED FORCES COMM INC
CS/ATTN FLORIDA
599997
3 X 7.00



LOWES COMPANIES INC
CS RHP/VETERANS
571605
5 X 11.66



Second Air Force CV-22 arrives at Edwards AFB

Courtesy of AFPN

EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — The Air Force's second CV-22 Osprey arrived here Oct. 27 — two months earlier than the contract's due date.

The first Air Force CV-22 was delivered for electromagnetic testing to Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., Sept. 16 and will arrive at Edwards in December. The third CV-22 will be delivered in February 2006.

The 8th Special Operations Squadron will be the first unit to fly the aircraft.

The Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center will use these three aircraft to conduct an operational utility evaluation next summer.

If the CV-22 completes the evaluation successfully it will be certified for use in training operations at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M., next fall.

The initial operational test and evaluation for the CV-22 is planned to begin October



CV-22 Osprey

Photograph by Kevin Kidd

2007. The Navy's Operational Test and Evaluation Force and AFOTEC operationally evaluated the MV-22, the Marine variant of the Osprey, between March and June this year. They rated it operationally effective, suitable and survivable.

The CV-22 is the special operations forces variant of the V-22 Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft.

Modifications to the Osprey aircraft made for the CV-22 variant are concentrat-

ed in the areas of communication, navigation, mission management and aircraft survivability.

The Osprey flight characteristics, including vertical takeoff and landing, short takeoff and landing and conversion to airplane mode.

The Air Force and U.S. Special Operations commands plan to purchase 50 CV-22s to conduct day or night long-range infiltration, exfiltration and resupply of special operations forces.

Services facilities adjust hours for Veterans Day

The following are the Veterans Day hours for 16th Services Squadron facilities:

Gator Lakes Golf Course

6:30 a.m. to dusk

Hurlburt Lanes

Closed

Spare Time Grill

Closed

J.R. Rockers

Closed

The Soundside

Closed

Velocity Subs

Closed

Enlisted hooch

Closed

Officers' hooch

Closed

Child development center

Closed

Community center

Closed

Teen center

Closed

Youth center open recreation

Closed

School age program

Closed

Information & tickets sales

Closed

ITT leisure travel sales

Closed

Auto skills

Closed

Frame skills

Closed

Wood skills

Closed

Arts & craft center

Closed

Outdoor recreation center/marina

9 a.m. — 4 p.m.

Aquatic center

10 a.m. — 7 p.m.

Dive club

Closed

Paintball fields

Closed

Aderholt Fitness Center

8 a.m. — 6 p.m.

Commando Fitness Center

Closed

Riptide Fitness Center

Closed

Oasis Dining Facility

The kitchen will only be serving ground and flight meals

Reef Dining Facility

B 6-8:30 a.m.; L 11 a.m. — 1 p.m.; D 4-6:30 p.m.

Riptide Dining Facility

Closed

Library

Closed

USA DISCOUNTERS, LTD.
CS/COMPUTERS B/W
599380
2 X 5.00

JIMMY'S PAWN SHOP (COOP)
CS RHP/VETERANS
571564
3 X 5.00

NATL NEWSPAPER/SPRINT
CS/BLAH BLAH
571663
4 X 10.50

SANCTUARY
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AUDIO
EXPRES-
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CS/WE
FINANCE
585103

SPIFFY WIN-
DOW TINT
CS/SPIFFY
571985
1 X 3.00

Week in History

The following is a list of extraordinary events that occurred this week in military history:

Nov. 10, 1918 – Last patrol flown by the American Air Service over enemy lines.

Nov. 11, 1935 – A world altitude record of 72,394.795 feet is set for balloons.

Nov. 12, 1942 – The 9th Air Force is established in the Middle East.

Nov. 13, 1943 – 57 B-24s and 62 B-25s made the heav-

iest raid of WWII against New Guinea.

Nov. 14, 1966 – A C-141 "Starlifter" was the first air-

craft to land in Antarctica.

Nov. 15, 1944 – The Boeing C-97 makes its first flight in 1944.

Nov. 16, 1959 – Capt. J.W. Kittinger parachuted from an altitude of 76,400 feet.



Courtesy photograph

Military postal agency offers advice for holiday mail

by Samantha Quigley
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – "Pack it well" and "mail it early" are two tips a military postal official offered today for holiday mail being sent to service members overseas.

The Department of Defense announced recommended holiday mail dates Oct. 31. Deadlines for mail classes are Nov. 26 for apace-available mail; Dec. 3, parcel-airlift mail; Dec. 10, priority mail and Dec. 19, express mail.

Mark DeDomenic recommends using nylon tape or reinforced packing tape on packages because other tapes tend to come off. Mr. DeDomenic Military Postal Service Agency assistant deputy director.

Any buzzing, ticking or vibrating items will be "red flagged," Mr. DeDomenic said.

So, to keep a package from getting bomb-squad attention, Mr. DeDomenic advises removing batteries from electronics.

Fill out customs labels completely and use a proper military address to help move the package through the system. If there's

concern the content list on the customs label will give away a surprise, Mr. DeDomenic said to place the form inside the package. Customers should then attach a label outside of the package noting the form is inside. Customers should also be conscious of the box's markings.

Regardless of the contents, boxes with hazardous substance or alcohol markings won't make it through the system, he said.

Boxes used to ship gifts should be strong and well-packed because of the long distances traveled and the high volume of parcels moving with them, Mr. DeDomenic said.

He said in the 2004 holiday season, his agency moved more than 28 million pounds of mail between Dec. 1 and 25.

"The mail volumes last (holiday season) were 52 percent more than the volumes the year before," Mr. DeDomenic said.

By comparison, roughly five million pounds of mail move through the agency in a month. The agency defines the holiday mailing season as Nov. 15 through Jan. 10.

Mr. DeDomenic said those who may not personally know a service member overseas, but want to share the holiday spirit, should visit the AmericaSupportsYou.mil.

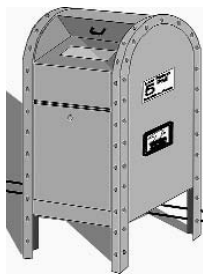
"That provides information on how you can support the troops even if you don't have a service member that is a family member or close relative," he said.

The site lists hundreds of organizations that offer ways the general public can support the troops. Several involve sending greeting cards or packages through these organizations.

However, for force-security reasons, packages addressed to "any service member" will not be shipped, Mr. DeDomenic said.

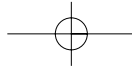
In the past, express mail for last-minute shipments relied on a thank-you note from the recipient to verify delivery, but the system has improved this year, he said.

Express mail tracking is available through the U.S. Postal Service Web site, as long as the mail isn't going to a combat zone, Mr. DeDomenic said.



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CS RHP/DON'T GET

FAMILY POOL SPA BIL-LIARD
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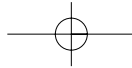
SOUTHERN CLASSIC GUN
CS/FWB
600374

JAMES
GIVEN
CS/MEN

DOROTHY'S
HAIR CARE
CS/FOR

EFCU ACCTS PAYABLE
CS/HELOC 3.9
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4 X 10.00

FIRST BAP-
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CHURCH/FW
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CS/FIRST
BAPTIST
571723
1 X 3.00



Special OPERATORS

Congratulations to the following individuals promoted to chief master sergeant:

Tobacco use increases risk for developing oral cancer

Courtesy of the 16th MDG

The Great American Smoke-Out is Nov. 17.

Cigarettes and cigarette smoke contain more than 4,000 chemicals, including 43 known to cause cancer.

These chemicals affect the lungs and heart and can also affect the mouth.

In the United States, approximately 30,000 people are newly diagnosed with oral cancer, and 7,000 – 8,000 die yearly from the disease. The toxic chemicals found in tobacco can damage cells in the lining of the oral cavity, impairing the cell's ability to repair itself. In the end, a tobacco user could lose normal use of his or her mouth, suffer from chronic pain, or facial disfigurement.

The risk of developing oral cancer is partially determined by a person's age and lifestyle. Cancer statistics show that more than 90 percent of oral cancers occur in individuals age 45 and older.

The primary influence of age on oral cancer rates is the additive impact over time of unhealthy behavior, such as tobacco use. Repeated assaults of toxins on healthy tissues eventually take their toll.

Regardless of age and duration of the habit, tobacco users are up to 18 times more likely to develop oral cancer than non-users. How can tobacco users protect them-

Signs, symptoms of oral cancer

- Swelling
- A lump that doesn't heal
- White or red patches inside the mouth that don't go away
- Loose teeth for no apparent reason
- Pain when swallowing
- A persistent sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing or in opening the mouth
- A nagging cough or persistent hoarseness
- Unusual bleeding in the nose or mouth
- Numbness or tingling in the lips or tongue

selves against oral cancer?

There are three lines of defense: knowledge, risk avoidance and regular dental check-ups that include an oral cancer examination.

Knowledge: Learn the warning signs and symptoms of oral cancer.

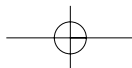
Avoidance: To reduce the risk for developing oral cancer, cut down or eliminate tobacco use.

Regular dentist visits and oral cancer examinations: As highly-trained specialists in oral diseases, dentists are the healthcare practitioner of choice for detecting oral cancers.

For more information, call the health and wellness center at 884-4292.

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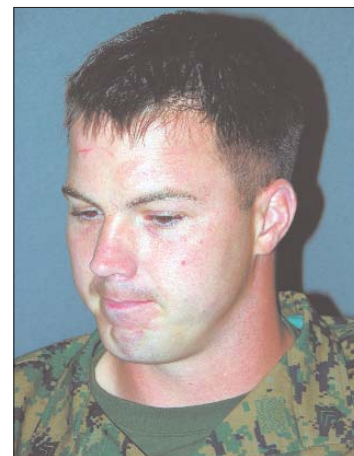
Dagger Point: Marine loses hands in convoy attack, teaches Airmen combat martial arts



"I don't have bad days. My days are no different than anyone else's. I have some different obstacles to overcome, but I have the same problems as everyone does."



"I understand that I have some injuries, but I could find a way to pull the trigger. There are other ways to fight."



Photographs by Senior Airman Heidi Davis

"It stinks to lose your hands, but we did a good job that day. It was a good day."

by Master Sgt. Kevin Owen and Senior Airman Heidi Davis
16th SOW Public Affairs

Former President Ronald Reagan once said, "Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference."

Marine Sgt. James "Eddie" Wright's dedication to his service made a difference for all military members.

Sergeant Wright was on his second tour in Iraq and living his dream as a newly-qualified recon Marine. However, April 7, 2004 changed his life forever.

On that day, Sergeant Wright and his fellow Marines from Bravo Company, 1st Reconnaissance Battalion, based at Camp Fallujah, Iraq, were called to escort a 15-vehicle convoy on a 10-mile trek to a supply point. They were then sent out on the hunt for insurgents, who had been actively using mortars and explosives in the area.

The convoy's commander sensed something was wrong – there was no traffic on the road. The Marines stopped, dismounted and swept the area, but found nothing.

Sergeant Wright's team moved forward in the lead Humvee. Then, a barrage of gunfire, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars exploded around the convoy.

It wasn't long until a RPG explosion rocked the vehicle. Nobody in the vehicle saw it coming.

Sergeant Wright opened his eyes

to see his hands had been blown off. The explosion also injured his thigh and broke a leg. With a bone protruding from the thigh and his hands gone, Sergeant Wright needed serious help fast.

The other Marines in the Humvee were overcome by the extent of Sergeant Wright's injuries.

Sergeant Wright, however, took charge of the situation by instructing the other Marines to call for support and treat his injuries. He also pointed out enemy emplacements, which helped his fellow Marines kill 27 insurgents.

Sergeant Wright's heroic actions continued as his team raced to safety, directing fire at the maneuvering insurgents.

Sergeant Wright was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor and remains on active-duty as an instructor with the Marine Corps Martial Arts Course in Quantico, Va.

Below is an excerpt from an interview Sergeant Wright gave the Commando when his instructor team visited Hurlburt Field recently to teach special operators close-quarter combat skills:

Commando: When did you know things were starting to go bad?

Wright: About 30 minutes before the actual ambush, we started seeing groups of people acting suspicious. You can tell when they're up to something by their demeanor.

We stopped for a security halt at one point because we thought something was wrong, like we were going to be hit by IED or an ambush.

However, we had a timeline and priority mission to complete, so we just pushed forward.

Commando: What about yourself allowed you to take charge despite your injuries?

Wright: I think just a good combat mindset. There are two things in particular that contributed to surviving that day: good Marines around me and good training.

There's no excuse for not taking charge when you're in the command billet. I may not have been able to pull the trigger, but I could still issue orders and lead.

Commando: What helped you maintain your mental well-being?

Wright: The support of my family and my fellow Marines as well as some intangibles, like just needing to put one foot in front of the other, and the need to adapt and overcome. That's instilled as part of being a Marine.

Commando: What are your good and bad days like?

Wright: I don't know. I don't have bad days. My days are no different than anyone else's. I usually don't get stuck in a rut for a whole day. I have some different obstacles to overcome, but I have the same problems that everybody does.

Commando: Would you consider April 7, 2004 to be the worst day of your life?

Wright: I sure wouldn't. No, it stinks to lose your hands, but we did a good job that day. I'm proud of the Marines in my platoon. We took out

27 insurgents that day. Another convoy that wasn't as well-trained as us could've lost a lot of other Marines' lives.

To turn the tide on the enemy like that, over such overwhelming odds, I can't believe it. It was a good day. We definitely took the fight to the enemy. But, by far I wouldn't say it was my worst day.

Commando: What kind of training can prepare someone to live through experiences like you had?

Wright: I don't know. Hard and realistic training is the best. Some of the biggest obstacles aren't physical, but they're mental – a good combat mindset and understanding of what you might face. All aspects of training must focus on physical and psychological preparation.

Commando: Why didn't you take the offered medical retirement?

Wright: I'm not ready to move on yet. As a youngster, I always wanted to be a Marine. That was always my dream. A lot of people don't get to achieve their life's goals at such a young age.

Commando: Would you go back to combat if they would let you?

Wright: I sure would. I understand that I have some injuries, but I could find a way to pull the trigger. There are other ways to fight.

A lot of times in a combat situation it's not the people who are pulling the trigger that are making the difference. I am sure I can find something that I can do to support the fight.

Military

Clinic closure

The 16th Medical Group will be closed at 11 a.m. Nov. 18 for an official function. It will re-open on Nov. 21.

The clinic will also be closed Nov. 24-25 for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Wheels of wisdom

Personnel operating government owned vehicles must have *Air Force Form 2296* on file with the 16th Logistics Readiness Squadron Operators Records & Licensing Section.

Civilians possessing a GOV license must have their physical fitness inquiry *OF Form 345*, reviewed by their unit vehicle control officer every four years.

For more information, contact your unit VCO or call the 16th LRS Operator Record & Licensing Section at 884-7321.

Area Defense Council

The area defense council office will be closed Nov. 17-18 due to a staff assistance visit.

For emergencies, call the Eglin ADC at 882-4185.

Rescinded order

The 16th Special Operations Wing commander has lifted the order issued Sept. 2, which restricted travel following Hurricane Katrina.

Members are still required to let commanders know where they are and how they can be reached.

Additionally, members should be mindful of and have some plans for potential fuel shortage issues and should adhere to a two-person policy when entering heavily affected areas.

Community

Traffic office hours

Effective Monday, the 16th Logistics Readiness Squadron personal property and passenger travel element's new walk-in customer service hours are 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Verbal orders will only be accepted for emergency short-notice travel. For more information about personal property, call 884-6051; for passenger travel, call 884-6619.

Greeting card contest

The 16th Services Squadron announces the 2005 Greeting Card Contest. Designers/builders may include family members. This annual greeting card contest is open to all Hurlburt Field squadrons.

All greeting cards must have a holiday theme with no specific religious



Photograph by Senior Airman Andy Kin

denominations. Winners will be announced at 4:30 p.m., Dec. 13 at the tree lighting ceremony.

Prizes totaling \$600 will be given away to the top three winners and top three honorable mentions. Squadrons not interested in competing are also invited to display their greeting cards at the main gate entrance.

Squadrons must bring completed cards to the main gate 8 a.m. - noon Dec. 6.

For more information, e-mail charles.lowrey@hurlburt.af.mil.

Munch & Mend

The base chapel will hold Munch & Mend at 5 p.m. Monday. Airmen can enjoy a free home-cooked meal, while having minor repairs done or stripes, patches or name tapes sewn on one clean uniform. For more information, call Bill White at 884-7371 or Jimmie Thomas at 315-4746.

Decal renewal

All personnel may update their 05-year vehicle decals for 07-year decals on a "first-come, first-served" basis. The two locations are: pass and registration, Building 90210 and visitor control center, Building 90048.

For more information, call Tech. Sgt. Aldrich Jones at 884-5233.

Spouses' club

A Hurlburt Spouses' Club luncheon will be at 10:30 a.m. Nov. 17 in The Soundside. Cost is \$10 for members and \$12 for non-members.

Childcare will be provided. For more information or reservations, call Karin Heaton at 515-0371.

Thanksgiving buffet

The Soundside is taking reservations for the annual Members-Only Thanksgiving Buffet Nov. 24. Seating times are 11 a.m., noon, 1 and 2 p.m.

Members-only pricing is \$15.95 for adults, \$8.50 for children ages 5-11 and free for children age 4 and under. Advance payment and reservations

are required. For more information and reservations, call The Soundside at 884-7507.

Caring and Sharing

Be a Caring and Sharing volunteer in South Santa Rosa County. Volunteers are needed to transport donated items, sort food, assemble food boxes and more. For more information, call Debra Rasmussen at 883-1079 or 939-4756.

Yard sale

The 16th Services Squadron is holding its annual yard sale at 7 a.m., Nov. 19 on The Soundside grounds. Tables may be rented to sell personal items. Cost is \$10 per six-foot table. For more information or to rent a table, call outdoor recreation at 884-6939.

Angel Tree

The Angel Tree Program kicks off at 1 p.m. Monday in the base exchange.

Song writing contest

The Dallas Songwriters Association announces the Songs from the Soul of Service song-writing contest open to all active-duty military members free of charge. For more information, visit www.songssoulservice.org.

Palace Chase

Junior officers are encouraged to look into Palace Chase Force Shaping if interested in switching to the Air National Guard.

Officers commissioned in the 2002-2003 calendar year will be eligible for consideration by the Force Shaping Board.

The Texas ANG is looking for qualified Air Force Specialty Codes for the 147th Fighter Wing, which will be redesignated as a predator squadron next year in Houston.

For more information, call Master Sgt. William Andujar at 884-2729 or visit www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/retsep/forceshaping/FSB.htm.

Retreat

The Niceville High School Choral Music Department's "Opus One" performed Nov. 4 at the 505th Command and Control Wing Veteran's Day retreat ceremony.

At the movies



Prices are \$3.50 for adults and \$1.75 for children 6-years-old and up. Movies start at 7 p.m. unless otherwise indicated.

Hurlburt Field - 884-7648

Friday - Flightplan (PG-13) Flying at 40,000 feet in a cavernous, state-of-the-art E-474 aircraft, Kyle faces every mother's worst nightmare when her six-year-old daughter Julia vanishes without a trace mid-flight from Berlin to New York.

Saturday - Tim Burton's Corpse Bride (PG) Set in a 19th century European village, this stop-motion, animated feature follows the story of Victor, a young man who is whisked away to the underworld and wed to a mysterious Corpse Bride.

Sunday - Exorcism of Emily Rose (PG-13) In an extremely rare decision, the Catholic Church officially recognized the demonic possession of a 19-year-old college freshman.

Eglin - 882-1066

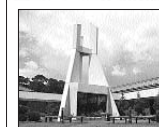
Friday - Serenity (PG-13) Captain Malcolm Reynolds, a hardened veteran on the losing side of a galactic civil war, now ekes out a living pulling off small crimes and transport-for-hire aboard his ship, Serenity. He leads a small, eclectic crew who are the closest thing he has left to family - squabbling, insubordinate and undyingly loyal.

Saturday - The Greatest Game Ever Played (PG) An amateur player from a working class family, Francis shocked the golf world when at the 1913 U.S. Open, flanked by his 10-year-old caddie, he defeated his idol, the defending British champion Harry. An unlikely match-up - the ingenué versus the seasoned champ - theirs was the greatest match the sport had ever known.

Sunday - An Unfinished Life (PG-13) Still in shock from his only son's death a decade ago, Einar has let his ranch fall into ruin along with his marriage. Now, Einar spends his days caring only for his hired handyman and last trusted friend, Mitch, who was gravely injured in an encounter with a grizzly bear.

(Editor's note: Movies are subject to change. Telephone numbers are provided for patrons to confirm dates.)

Base chapel



Catholic Mass
Saturday, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, 7:15 and 10 a.m.
Confessions: Saturday, 4:30 to 5 p.m., or by request
Youth: 5 p.m. Sunday
Religious Education: September - May

Protestant Services

Sunday, 8:30 a.m. (Traditional worship)

11:30 a.m. (Contemporary worship)

Religious Education: August - May

Youth and Singles groups available

Jewish Services (882-2111)

Sabbath services: Friday, 7:30 p.m., Eglin Chapel Center

Muslim Services (882-2111), Eglin Chapel Center

Jumua: Friday, 12:45 p.m.

For more information, call 884-7795.

Airman Against Drunk Driving



For a free, confidential ride home, call AADD at 884-8844. Don't drink and drive.

24-hour Fraud, Waste and Abuse hotline:

Hurlburt Field - 884-6322

Air Force - (800) 538-8429

Department of Defense - (800) 424-9098

Send all article ideas to commando@hurlburt.af.mil

Volunteers needed

The Hurlburt community needs volunteers for the following programs: The Airman's Attic, family services, mentors and more. For more information, call Dee Dee Rodriguez at 884-1533 or send an e-mail deedee.rodriguez.ctr@hurlburt.af.mil.

Military equal opportunity

Volunteers are needed for upcoming ethnic observances.

The Hurlburt Field Military Equal Opportunity Office is seeking volunteers to serve as chair and co-

chair for three upcoming ethnic observances. This is a great chance to be a leader in organizing, coordinating and planning events to promote awareness and understanding in learning about different cultures.

For more information, call the following point of contacts:

Martin Luther King Birthday, Jan. 16

Master Sgt. Norman Williams, 884-6844

Black History Month, February

Sergeant Williams

Women's History Month, March

Tech. Sgt. Jeannie Crosby 884-2631.

Classes

Univ. of Oklahoma

The University of Oklahoma is offering two graduate programs at Hurlburt Field. On-site instruction and distance learning courses will earn students a master's degree in 18-24 months.

For more information, call 581-3000 or e-mail aphurlburt@ou.edu.

Online CLEP test available for military

Courtesy of the education center

College Level Examination Program e-computer-based tests are now available at the base education office for military members.

The new program is a partnership with the Okaloosa-Walton College National Test Center.

"We took the opportunity to establish an NTC because of all the advantages it offered," said Rose Caruth, education and base training flight chief. "In these days of budgetary constraints, it just made sense to establish an NTC on Hurlburt Field."

The 90-minute, multiple-choice tests measure examinees' college-level knowledge gained through academic

study, technical training and personal experience. The acceptable score and the amount of credit awarded for each exam is determined by each college or university.

Establishing an on-base NTC has many advantages. One of those is the availability of 35 CLEP exams. Previously, the education center could only provide 14 paper-based tests. Also, examinees receive CLEP e-CBT results immediately after completing the exams.

Test capacity has been increased for the education center to meet the expanding testing needs of the Air Force, but the examination inventory has been reduced.

While the new exams save Airmen time, it saves the Department of Defense money. The CLEP e-CBTs cost the DOD \$55 as opposed to \$120 for the paper-based version.

The Hurlburt Field Education Office is also pre-positioned to offer the on-line testing of DANTES Subject Standardized Tests beginning in 2006.

A few of the CLEP e-CBT titles available include college-level Spanish, German and French; English composition; math; humanities; natural science; principles of management; U.S. history 1 and 2.

More than 2,900 institutions accept CLEP credit, however, examinees need to ask their school about its examination acceptance policy and required score. Tests are scaled from 20-80, with 50 being the recommended passing score by the American Council of Education.

Typically, the five CLEP general exams measure achievement in areas of general or liberal education requirements taught during the first two years of college.

Students can receive up to six semester hours of credit for the tests. The 29-subject CLEP e-CBTs cover more specific subjects, and are worth three to 12 semester hours depending on the subject.

The on-base CLEP e-CBTs are only available to active-duty, Reserve and National Guard Airmen.

A limited number of CLEP e-CBTs are available to eligible DOD Acquisition Workforce civilians.

All other students, including family members, may register to take CLEP e-CBTs at the OWC Niceville Campus, by calling 729-6922.

Visit the Air Force Virtual Education Center at <https://afvec.langley.af.mil/Pages/home.aspx> to view the entire list of available exams and access study guides.

Call 884-6724 to set up an appointment to take an exam.

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Courtesy photograph

Rolling to Dothan

Steve Trapasso, 16th Component Maintenance Squadron, glides down the rink in a roller-hockey game. The Hurlburt Hawks, the base roller hockey team, traveled to Dothan, Ala., for a roller hockey tournament. The Hawks won one of four games, beating the University of Florida Gators, 8-0.

Cross-country runners begin season in stride

Intramural cross-country participants run first of five races



The intramural cross-country season kicked off Nov. 4 with a 2.5-mile race that began at the Aderholt Fitness Center. The top three finishers were: the 20th Special Operations Squadron, Air Force Special Operations Command #1 and 16th Component Maintenance Squadron.

Photograph by Jamie Haig

Runners run along the road parallel to the paintball fields.

Just another day of exercise – or was it?

Hurlburt Airmen place in top 15 in IronMan Triathlon Championship

by Jamie Haig
16th SOW Public Affairs

Imagine swimming in the ocean for two miles then hopping on a bike for a quick 112-mile race and finishing with a 26-mile run. And, completing all these events in less than 12 hours.

Impossible? Not for two Hurlburt Field Airmen.

Abby Ruscetta, 16th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron and Spencer Cocanour, 720th Operations Support Squadron, were two of the Air Force's representatives in this year's IronMan Triathlon World Championship in Kona, Hawaii, Oct. 15. It was her first IronMan World Championship and his third.

"I went to St. Croix (Virgin Islands) in May with a friend of mine who was competing for a slot in the world championship," said Ruscetta. "There were 30 slots available and I got the 30th slot. It was a dream come true."

Cocanour has been in six



Photograph by Capt. Louis Ruscetta

Abby Ruscetta, 16th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, nears the finish line of the IronMan Triathlon Championship Oct. 15.

IronMan competitions and three World Championship events.

"I did my first triathlon in college," said Cocanour. "It's tough. And qualifying for a world championship outright is really difficult."

Ruscetta and Cocanour were on the military team, where each service has four slots – three for men, one for women. At the Kona event, the Air Force team placed second with a total time of 44 hours, 11 minutes, 10 seconds.

Ruscetta placed second for the military women with a

time of 11 hours, 36 minutes, 44 seconds and Cocanour's time of 11 hours, 18 minutes, 40 seconds, earned him 11th place for the military men.

Preparing for a triathlon is not taken lightly by either athlete. Both Airmen trained six or seven days a week, with the weekends consisting of 12-14 hours of training. They each had coaches that helped them train correctly.

"I started my training for this IronMan back in January," said Cocanour. "I don't like swimming and Abby would have to drag me to the pool."

"I've been swimming all my life," said Ruscetta. "It's biking I didn't care for. But at least I could call up Spence and ask if he wanted to join me in a 100-mile ride."

Cocanour would train until 9 p.m. during the week and would schedule the long bike rides or runs on the weekends. Ruscetta's training was similar, with a mixture of biking, riding and swimming on the weekends. Both athletes understand the importance of keeping their focus on the game and keeping nutrition levels constant.

Cocanour had an added bonus when he finished his

competition. His wife, Amy, a lieutenant commander in the Coast Guard, was also in the same IronMan race. She finished 35 minutes after her husband and 17 minutes after Ruscetta – placing third for the military women.

When asked if at any point they felt like stopping, both athletes shook their heads.

"No way," said Ruscetta. "I wanted to finish with a smile, no matter what place I was in."

"Stopping wasn't an option," said Cocanour. "It wasn't a question of if I can finish, but how I'll feel when I do finish."



Photograph by Jeff Geoghagan

Spencer Cocanour, 720th Operations Support Squadron, completes the bicycle portion of the IronMan triathlon.

In the bleachers

Intramural cross country

The intramural cross-country season began this month and will include a total of five races. The course lengths range from two to six miles. The current schedule is Nov. 18, Dec. 2 and 16 and Jan. 6. Teams must have a least five runners. If a squadron doesn't have enough runners for a team, interested participants will be placed in a runners' pool. For eligibility information, call 884-6884.

Turkey Trot

The 24th Annual 5K Turkey Trot is Nov. 23 at the Aderholt Fitness Center. The race is open to all ages, and participants may run, walk or rollerblade. Check-in time is 7:30 a.m.; race begins at 8 a.m. For more information, call the Aderholt Fitness Center at 884-6884 or the Commando Fitness Center at 884-4412.

10-mile Challenge

The 13th Annual 10-Mile Challenge is Dec. 10 at the Aderholt Fitness Center. Runners must register by noon Dec. 8 at any base fitness facility. Check in is 6-6:30 a.m.; race begins at 7 a.m. The race is free, and trophies will be given for many categories. Volunteers are needed for the event. For more information, call Staff Sgt. Katrina Stone at 884-6884.

Men's varsity basketball

The Hurlburt Field men's varsity basketball team will play the Eglin Air Force Base men's team at 3 p.m. Saturday and at noon Sunday at the Aderholt Fitness Center.

Youth roller hockey

A pre-season youth roller hockey scrimmage and practice is Saturday at the main roller rink across from the youth center. Youth age 10 and under will meet 10 a.m. – noon; youth age 11 and older will meet noon to 2 p.m. Youth must have skates, a stick, gloves, a helmet, and knee-, shin- and elbow pads.